

School Counseling Program Overview

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Today's world provides daily challenges for the students of Roanoke County. Some are aspects of normal growth and development while others deal with academic progress and personal, social, and career issues. Our schools seek to meet these needs with an integrative approach that includes a Guidance and Counseling component.

The School Counseling Program in Roanoke County Public Schools concerns itself with the developmental process of maximizing each child's potential. It is a cooperative effort among counselors, students, school staff, and parents. It is meant to benefit all students in our schools.

In keeping with the goals of public education in Roanoke County, the purpose of the School Counseling Program is to provide assistance for students in their academic/educational, personal/social, and career development. The School Counseling Program is preventive in its focus and based upon the developmental stages of students in grades K-12. Because student needs vary at different age levels, the areas of emphasis will vary accordingly. The program builds a foundation for learning in the following areas:

Academic/Educational

- ◆ orientation/transition to the educational environment
- ◆ resolution of problems which interfere with learning
- ◆ awareness of academic abilities, strengths, needs, and interests
- ◆ knowledge of effective study/test-taking skills
- ◆ awareness of curricular alternatives, graduation requirements and career goals
- ◆ pursuit of a planned and balanced academic program consistent with abilities, interests, and educational needs
- ◆ awareness of post-secondary academic opportunities

Personal/Social

- ◆ development of increased self-understanding
- ◆ establishment of positive relationships through effective communication skills
- ◆ acquisition of problem-solving/decision-making and coping skills
- ◆ encouragement of self-directive and responsible behavior
- ◆ understanding of the need for positive attitudes toward school, learning, community and society

Career Development

- ◆ awareness of, and knowledge about the world of work and careers
- ◆ acquisition of information about educational and vocational/training opportunities both within and beyond the public schools
- ◆ use of knowledge of self as it relates to career planning
- ◆ establishment of tentative career objectives
- ◆ preparation for future education and employment

Professional school counselors are licensed counselors who are specifically trained to provide counseling services in a school setting and seek to encourage a cooperative relationship between school and home. This is accomplished through a set of strategies including consultation with students, teachers, parents, and administrators; personal counseling in small groups or with individual students; and provision of information for referral to community resources, as needed. Classroom instruction addresses topics designed to enhance academic success and progress toward career goals for all students.

Materials used in the School Counseling Program are periodically reviewed and are available for parental review in each school. Interested parents should schedule an appointment with the school counselor for this purpose.

In the event that parents/guardians wish to limit participation of their child in the Roanoke County Public Schools' Counseling Program, the parents/guardians should provide written notification to the school counselor within 15 days of receipt of this letter.

Thank you for your consideration and review of this information. If you have questions now or in the future, please do not hesitate to contact the principal or your child's professional school counselor.